



Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities

Celebrating 31 Years of Leadership & Advocacy



MEMBERS

Janet A. Neal
Chair

Richard Krzyzanowski
Vice Chair

Kecia Weller
Treasurer

Mary Chambers
Viola Vivian Corbett
Ernest T. Hamilton, Jr.
Michael G. Gureckas
Harley Rubenstein
Bernard Siegel
Alexia Teran
John B. Troost
Wendy Welt
Sheila D. Wright

MINUTES OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities was held on Wednesday, December 20, 2006, at Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Room 374, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Neal at 1:06 p.m. Introduction of Commissioners, Staff and audience members followed.

APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 15, 2006 MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Siegel, seconded by Commissioner Krzyzanowski, and duly carried, the minutes for the meeting of November 15, 2006 were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Block – expressed her concerns regarding Governor Schwarzenegger's proposal for Universal Healthcare; and the use of Medi-Cal and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) by undocumented immigrants.

Tedi Joy- Remhild – reported that the Personal Assistance Services Council (PASC) in collaboration with the California Health Incentives Improvement Project (CHIIP) will have the “250% Working Disabled Training Program” in January, February and March of 2007. The training programs will provide information on how a person enrolled in the “250% Medi-Cal Working Disabled Program” can maintain their Medi-Cal and In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) benefits while earning as much as \$50,000 per year. The trainings will be held at the following locations: the Verdugo Job Center in Glendale CA, South Bay One Stop Business & Career Center in Inglewood CA, and the Compton Career Links Job Center in Compton CA. Ms. Joy-Remhild distributed a flyer/registration form for the event. The PASC may be contacted for additional information at 1-877-565-4477.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Development of the Access Awards Committee

Chair Neal informed Commissioners/Luncheon Committee members that she has started planning for the 2007 Access Awards Luncheon; and the first Luncheon Committee Meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 2007. Fundraising plans include, inviting past awardees to the Community Forum Radio Show (KTYM 1460 AM) to provide them with an opportunity to share their experience as an Access Awardee, and talk about their contributions to the Disability community. Another fundraising approach is to solicit sponsorships from former awardees for the Bill Tainter Scholarship Fund, or request purchasing ads for the luncheon's tribute journal. Chair Neal also reported her recent visit to the Board of Supervisors' Meeting to participate in a scroll presentation by Supervisor Antonovich to former Commissioner Ruth Ann Acosta. Chair Neal informed Commissioners that many Board Deputies congratulated the Commission for the Access Awards Luncheon. Chair Neal thanked the Commissioners for their effort and dedication to make the event a success.

Review of the Final Financial Report Following the 2006 Access Awards Luncheon

Chair Neal reviewed the 2006 financial report with the Commissioners. She reported that compared to former financial reports, statistics show that the luncheons prepared with the assistance of a fundraiser have not proven to contribute a substantial increase in donation levels. Chair Neal wants to continue discussion on a fundraiser at future luncheon committee meeting.

Request to Change Name of Community Forum Radio Program

Chair Neal presented a proposal to the Commission to have the name of the radio program, "Community Forum" changed to the "Disability Network." Chair Neal deems the latter to be appropriate because she hosts both a radio and television program, and Commissioner Hamilton makes television appearances where discussion takes place about disability issues affecting the disabled community. After further discussion on the matter, on motion of Commissioner Weller, seconded by Commissioner Troost and duly carried, the Commission's radio program, "Community Forum" will now be called the "Community Network."

CHAIR'S REPORT (Cont.)

County Counsel Finding Regarding Anique.com Issue

Chair Neal advised the Commissioners that she received a letter from Maya Lee, County Counsel in relation to presentations made by Mr. Bruce Kasper on www.anique.com at past Commission meetings. Discussion ensued on the matter, and Commissioners came to a consensus that the intention of the Commission was only to convey the information to the Supervisors. The Commissioners agreed that the Commission had no standing or ability to offer further assistance; and therefore, could not offer Mr. Kasper assistance in getting the information he is seeking.

Presentation of Certificate of Appreciation to Aurora Garcia

Chair Neal presented Aurora Garcia with a certificate of appreciation in recognition for her commitment and efforts for facilitating and promoting equality for the people with disabilities.

STAFF REPORT

Ms. Dedie Ward had nothing to report; but wished everyone "Happy Holidays, and a Safe and Prosperous New Year.

**PRESENTATION BY CHRISTOPHER GABLER REGARDING
INTEGRA MOUSE**

Mr. Christopher Gabler is 32 years old. He is a quadriplegic due to a snow skiing accident. He is currently enrolled at North Valley Occupational Center; and aspires to be a website designer. Mr. Gabler learned about the Commission and Bill Tainter Scholarships; and came before the Commission to ask for its assistance to purchase an integra mouse. Due to his disability, this device is needed to continue his career path. Mr. Gabler currently owns a device that limits his drawing capabilities to horizontal and vertical lines. With the integra mouse, Mr. Gabler will be able to draw curved lines, circles, and other round shapes; thus enabling him to produce more elaborate and detailed drawings and graphics.

Chair Neal informed Mr. Gabler that the Commission does not generally give money grants to individual to purchase items; however, she informed Mr. Gabler that she would refer him to individuals that could be potential sponsors. In addition, Chair Neal invited Mr. Gabler to participate in the Commission's Community Network Radio Program to seek sponsorships.

Commissioner Teran also offered Mr. Gabler names of potential sponsors, such as the GATES Foundation.

PRESENTATION BY OFFICER PAUL VASQUEZ, LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT – COUNTY'S CITIZEN CITATION PROGRAM

Mr. Paul D. Vasquez, Supervising Parking Control Officer reported that the County's Citizen Citation Program is currently under the umbrella of the Sheriff's Department. Mr. Vazquez introduced Ms. Katherine R. Vukovich, Assistant Director of the CLEPP Volunteer Program with the Sheriff's Department who gave an overview of volunteer programs, including the Citizen's Citation Program.

Ms. Vukovich reported that currently there are approximately 4900 volunteers that assist Los Angeles County Sheriff Deputies; the largest volunteer program in the Country. These volunteers are assigned to 23 Sheriff's Departments Countywide. 700 of these volunteers are trained volunteers in patrol cars. The volunteers perform duties such as the Citizen's Parking Citation Program a few hours, once a week or on weekends. The Citizen's Citation Program is responsible for citing vehicles that are parked in handicapped parking spaces illegally. A great number of volunteers are also assigned to Sheriff's Stations countywide, where they assist deputies in the capacity of chaplains and station clergy. The volunteers help deputies with death notifications; and various other station functions. Other volunteer programs include volunteers who go out on crime scene investigations with Deputies; volunteers that assist with searches for narcotics; certified volunteers and canines that assist with searches for missing people; and volunteers that patrol different areas of the County to monitor businesses and residents. Ms. Vukovich reported that all individuals interested in the volunteer program are required to complete extensive training and probationary periods before being able to assist the Deputies as volunteers.

Deputy Victor Zavala, Community Specialist, along with other Deputies, provides training for volunteers. Individuals go through an application process, a background check, 24 hours of extensive training, and six months of probation before they can go out to perform volunteer duties. Applications are available on the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department web site.

Deputy Zavala reported that volunteers engaging in County's Citizen Citation Program are trained to avoid confrontations, and are not permitted to issue citations to occupied vehicles that are parked illegally in disabled parking spaces due to the great danger that doing so poses.

Deputy Zavala also reported that the Deputy Sheriffs realize that volunteers play an important role and are essential to them. Therefore, in April of every year the Sheriff's Department and the Board of Supervisors recognize the individuals for time volunteered to the program. In addition to this recognition in April, the volunteers are also recognized in their respective stations with commemorative pins.

(Commissioner Rubenstein joined the meeting)

After a question and answer forum, Chair Neal thanked Officer Paul Vasquez, Deputy Victor Zavala, and Ms. Katherine R. Vukovich for their informative and valuable information.

ITEMS NOT ON THE POSTED AGENDA TO BE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA

The Commission voted to place at a future agenda, for approval, writing a letter to the Board of Supervisor requesting a status report on the closure of Rancho Los Amigos Rehabilitation Center. Said motion passed with no oppositions or abstentions or. Commissioners Gurekas, Corbett, and Welt were absent.

ITEMS NOT ON THE POSTED AGENDA TO BE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA (Cont.)

Commissioner Wright requested that the following items be placed on future agendas for review and discussion:

- Commission's Mission Statement
- Ralph M. Brown Act
- Commission's Parliamentary Responsibilities
- County Counsel and Board Deputies assigned to the Commission
- Retreat for the Commission on Disabilities

Commissioner Weller reported that she has not taken an oath to the office of Treasurer and would like to be sworn to office at a future meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Donna Dougherty announced that she recently received a letter from Thomas A. Saenz, Counsel to Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa in response to concerns she raised regarding accessibility for the disabled community to the Los Angeles Griffith Park Observatory.

Mr. Allen Abrams, representing the California State Department of Rehabilitation announced that CSUN will sponsor the Assisted Technology Fair in April 2007. Mr. Abrams will keep the Commission informed on the development of the event.

Martha Arana, staff reported that the Commission on Disabilities' Web Site is live. Agendas and Minutes of Commission meetings are available on this site. The web address is www.laccod.org.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion of Commissioner Weller, seconded by Commissioner Krzyzanowski, and unanimously carried, the Commission adjourned the meeting in loving memory of Peg Oliveri at 2:42 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Janet A. Neal, Chair
Richard Krzyzanowski, Vice-Chair
Mary Chambers
Harley D. Rubenstein
Bernard Siegel
Alexia Teran
John B. Troost
Kecia Weller, Treasurer
Sheila Wright

Excused Absence

Michael Gureckas

Unexcused Absence

Viola Vivian Corbett
Wendy Welt

Board of Supervisors

Dedie Ward, Staff
Martha Arana, Staff

County of Los Angeles

Kurt C. Hagen, OACC
Deputy Victor Zavala, LASD
Katherine R. Vukovich, LASD
Paul D. Vasquez, LASD

ASI

Richard Martindale-Essington
Teddie Joy-Remhild

Guests

John Whitbread, Emergency Preparedness and Response Program
Department of Public Health
Roxy Ortiz, Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center
Jessie Padilla, Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center
Magda Carrero, Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center
Ralph Acuna, Los Angeles City Department on Disability
Dora Garcia, Los Angeles City Department on Disability
Allan Abrams, California State Department of Rehabilitation
Steven D. Simon, Aids Coordinator, City of Los Angeles
Chris Gabler, North Valley Professional Center
Enrique Beltran, Caregiver
Donna Pomerantz, Community Rehabilitation, Independent Living Center
Aurora Garcia
Donna Dougherty
Linda Block